



Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Eric Croft
Representative Allen Kemplen

Sponsor Statement House Bill 413

"An Act relating to intensive family preservation services; and providing for an effective date."

HB 413 allows the Department of Health and Social Services to make available an intensive intervention effort prior to the removal of children from their parents to state custody when the family is in crisis. The program is based on a model successfully used by Washington State since 1974 called *Homebuilders*.

Homebuilders is a comprehensive program that intervenes in a family's moment of crisis, when other efforts have been tried and failed. It applies to children who are in imminent risk of unnecessary placement but are not in danger of imminent risk of harm if they stay with their family.

- Homebuilders in Washington State has been very successful and in 1982 published an 88% success rate* among participants in the project.
- The program is cost effective. In 1986, the cost of the Washington State Homebuilders was \$2,600 per child per year. The cost of foster care placement was \$7,186 per child per year. The cost of group home placement was \$22,373 per child per year. This does not begin to take into consideration how much it costs the state to put a child in an institution, nor increased costs in Alaska.

Homebuilder's success is built on the following program characteristics:

- Immediate response (within 24 hours) by a caseworker or caseworker team;
- 24-hour-a-day availability of the same caseworker for up to 6 weeks;
- Service delivery by the same caseworker in small caseloads (2 families per worker or 6 families per team); and
- Approximately 15 hours of intensive home service provided by the same caseworker each week.

HB 413 allows funding of one position to research Federal and other funding sources for the program in Alaska. The benefit of this position's research would be finding additional non-GF monies to benefit the budgets of other programs as well.

*Based on how long the child stays in their home after the program is terminated.

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